

Members

Sen. Patricia Miller, Chairperson
Sen. Richard Young
Rep. Charlie Brown
Rep. Richard Mangus



LEGISLATIVE EVALUATION OVERSIGHT POLICY SUBCOMMITTEE

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MEETING MINUTES¹

Meeting Date: September 23, 2003
Meeting Time: 11:00 A.M.
Meeting Place: State House, 200 W. Washington St.,
Room 130
Meeting City: Indianapolis, Indiana
Meeting Number: 1

Members Present: Sen. Patricia Miller, Chairperson; Rep. Charlie Brown; Rep. Richard Mangus.

Members Absent: Sen. Richard Young.

Sen. Patricia Miller called the meeting of the Legislative Evaluation Oversight Policy Subcommittee to order at 11:05 p.m.

Sen. Miller briefly described the purpose of the Subcommittee and introduced Ms. Karen Firestone of the Legislative Services Agency (LSA).

Status Report on Evaluations - Karen Firestone, LSA

Ms. Firestone distributed several documents to the Subcommittee, including a table summarizing the status of various evaluation committees (Exhibit A); a copy of IC 2-5-21 establishing the legislative evaluation and oversight process (Exhibit B); Legislative Council Resolution (LCR) 00-7 regarding the Public Safety Matters Evaluation Committee (Exhibit C); LCR 01-07 regarding the Education Matters Evaluation Committee and the evaluation of the State Fire Marshal (Exhibit D); LCR 01-09 regarding the Health and Child Care Issues Evaluation Committee and the Recycling Evaluation Committee (Exhibit E); and SEA 57 - 2003

¹ Exhibits and other materials referenced in these minutes can be inspected and copied in the Legislative Information Center in Room 230 of the State House in Indianapolis, Indiana. Requests for copies may be mailed to the Legislative Information Center, Legislative Services Agency, 200 West Washington Street, Indianapolis, IN 46204-2789. A fee of \$0.15 per page and mailing costs will be charged for copies. These minutes are also available on the Internet at the General Assembly homepage. The URL address of the General Assembly homepage is <http://www.ai.org/legislative/>. No fee is charged for viewing, downloading, or printing minutes from the Internet.

regarding the evaluation of the Family and Social Services Administration (FSSA) (Exhibit F).

Ms. Firestone described the status of the three evaluation committees still in existence, including the method by which they were established, the anticipated expiration dates in lieu of any extensions by the Legislative Council, and the additional topics assigned to each committee by the Legislative Council.

The Public Safety Matters Evaluation Committee (to expire December 31, 2003) was assigned the following additional topics: motor vehicle titling and registration, indoor pyrotechnics at nightclubs, and driving with impairments other than drugs and alcohol.

The Health and Child Care Issues Evaluation Committee (to expire December 31, 2003) was studying the following topics: the Child Care Development Fund and the Health Professions Bureau, training and licensing of child care facilities, and the nurse shortage.

The Recycling Evaluation Committee (to expire December 31, 2005) is currently reviewing the evaluation report received during this interim.

Ms. Firestone described the process by which an evaluation committee may request the Legislative Council to extend the term of the committee.

Ms. Firestone also described the status of the evaluation of the Family and Social Services Administration. Unlike the other evaluation topics described above, which are typically established by the Legislative Council upon the recommendation of the Legislative Evaluation and Oversight Policy Subcommittee, the FSSA evaluation was established by legislation (SEA 57 - 2003). Specific provisions of SEA 57 include a prohibition against directing the staff to perform any evaluations of agencies other than FSSA until the FSSA evaluation is completed. Also, SEA 57 does not provide a specific deadline by which the evaluation report is to be completed. SEA 57 describes the specific issues to be evaluated, including the organizational structure and size of FSSA, a description of the interaction of programs within FSSA and with other agencies, a description of contracted services, and a description of the communication channels used within FSSA.

Ms. Firestone explained that the committee that will review the evaluation report has not been appointed at this time, and the report is in the primary stages of development. Ms. Firestone added that the targeted completion date of the report is next July, although SEA 57 - 2003 does not provide a specific deadline for completion of the report. Rep. Charlie Brown raised the question as to whether one year would be sufficient time to evaluate an agency as large as FSSA, adding that the audit needs to be thorough and that, perhaps, the targeted completion date should be extended.

Members of the Subcommittee suggested that the following issues be addressed in the FSSA audit: (1) the fact that there have been nine secretaries of FSSA since the creation of the agency and the impact this has on continuity; (2) communication within FSSA; (3) whether there is too much or too little support and administrative staff and expenditures within FSSA; (4) the fiscal accountability within the agency; (5) the best structure to use for the delivery of social services; and (6) whether the agency can be made better or less expensive.

Sen. Miller introduced Ms. Pat Rios, the incoming Secretary of the Family and Social Services Administration, to the Subcommittee. Ms. Rios indicated that her appointment becomes official on September 30, 2003. She stated that she is engaged in transition and is currently working at becoming more familiar with FSSA and its programs and hopes to do what is necessary to improve service delivery. She added that FSSA was very willing to supply information and to cooperate with LSA in its conduct of the audit.

Rep. Charlie Brown raised the issue of the General Assembly requiring the collection of fireworks data in the previous legislative session, while the Public Safety Matters Evaluation Committee is set to expire by the end of 2003.

Rep. Richard Mangus expressed a concern about a specific portion of the Recycling Report and whether changes could be made to the report. Ms. Firestone stated that the report was finalized and published in July 2003 and was presented to the members of the Recycling Evaluation Committee in August. She stated, however, that the report represents only the beginning of the process, and during this interim and next, the Recycling Evaluation Committee can review the report, hear testimony from interested parties, request additional information, and make recommendations to the General Assembly.

Sen. Miller raised the issue about the need for the Subcommittee to, at some point, establish the evaluation topics which will follow the FSSA audit. Sen. Miller stated that topics are typically assigned by the Subcommittee several months prior to commencement of the evaluation by staff, either by following the schedule proposed in statute or at the discretion of the Subcommittee. She indicated that this would also depend on the time needed by staff to complete the FSSA audit.

Sen. Miller requested that staff prepare and send a letter to all 150 legislators asking for suggestions as to future evaluation topics. She added that perhaps a meeting to further discuss this issue could be held on the day of and prior to the next Legislative Council meeting.

There being no further business to conduct, Sen. Miller adjourned the meeting at about 11:45 a.m.